



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/790,685

03/03/2004

Toshiharu Takahashi

040098

2291

23850

7590

11/03/2004

ARMSTRONG, KRATZ, QUINTOS, HANSON & BROOKS, LLP  
1725 K STREET, NW  
SUITE 1000  
WASHINGTON, DC 20006

EXAMINER

NGUYEN, PHUONGCHI T

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2833

DATE MAILED: 11/03/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/790,685

Applicant(s)

TAKAHASHI ET AL.

Examiner

Phuongchi Nguyen

Art Unit

2833

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5, 9 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 and 6-8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.

☒ Attachment 1

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

Art Unit: 2833

In regarding to claim 3, Tanaka et al discloses the joint connector wherein the supporting part (A) at the wall to slidably support the coupling member (31a) is a notch (a groove), wherein an engaging part (F of 31a) to prevent the coupling member (31a) from lateral displacement is provided at stopping side (E of A) of a slidable part (side wall of A) of the notch (groove), wherein a mating part (side wall of A) to be engaged with the engaging part (F of 31a) is provided at the coupling member (31a).

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. Claims 5 and 9-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tanaka et al (US5545055).

In regarding to claims 5 and 10, Tanaka et al discloses an terminal (20) comprising electrically contacting part (21) at one side; and an electric wire connecting part (25+24+23) at the other side, wherein a resiliently clipping member (25) is provided at the end of the electric contact part (21) and the electric wire connecting part (25+24+23) to clip a coupling member (31a), the coupling member (31a) connecting the terminals (20) with each other (figure 4).

Tanaka lacks a resiliently clipping member provided between the electric contact part and the electric wire connecting part. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill at the time the invention was made to rearrange the resiliently clipping member of Tanaka et al in between the electric contact part and the electric wire connecting part for the purpose of design choice.

**DETAILED ACTION**

1. Applicant's Preliminary amendment of March 03, 2004 is acknowledged. It is noted that claim 10 is amended.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Tanaka et al (US5545055).

In regarding to claim 1, Tanaka et al discloses a joint connector (a labeled connector) comprising a terminal (20) received by a terminal receiving chamber (2b) in a connector housing (1), and a coupling member (31a) to electrically connect a plurality of terminals (20) with each other, wherein a supporting part (A) to slidably support the coupling member (31a) is provided at a wall of the terminal receiving chamber (2b), wherein a resiliently clipping member (25) is provided at the terminal (20) to clip the coupling member (31a) at a slide end (B) of the supporting part (A) (Attachment 1 and 4).

In regarding to claim 2, Tanaka et al discloses the joint connector wherein the supporting part (A) at the wall to slidably support the coupling member (31a) is a notch (a groove), wherein a positioning member (C) between the clips (25) with which a side part (side wall) of the coupling member (31a) comes into contact, is provided at starting side (D) of a slidable part (side wall of A) of the notch (groove) to prevent the coupling member (31a) from lateral displacement (Attachment 1).

Art Unit: 2833

In regarding to claim 9, Tanaka et al discloses the terminal wherein the tip part of the resiliently clipping member (25) is formed to have a tapered opening (a space between the free clip end of 25) (figure 4).

***Allowable Subject Matter***

6. Claims 4 and 6-8 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

7. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

In regarding to claim 4, Tanaka et al fails to disclose a joint connector comprising a plurality of slidably contacting pieces being continued to the joint piece of the coupling member, and the vertically contacting piece is clipped by the resiliently clipping members of the terminal.

In regarding to claim 6, the prior art fails to teaches or suggest a pair of free ends of the resiliently clipping member to clip the coupling member, continued to the rear anchor and to the electric contact part.

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure: Sato et al (US6386925), Brockman David (US5669788), Takada et al (US6573453) Takamura et al (US6666729), Scherer et al (US6780069), Zhao et al (US6730057), Ramey et al (US6478624), Maeda et al (US6461201), Sato Kei (US6375518, US6343960, US6332811, US6319071) and Maeda Akira (US6354887) are cited to show in the joint connector having terminal receiving chamber, a resiliently clipping member of the terminal.

***Conclusion***

Art Unit: 2833

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuongchi Nguyen whose telephone number is (571) 272-2012.

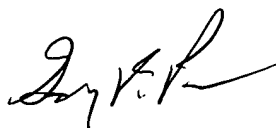
The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00AM-4:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

PCN

October 30, 2004



Gary Paumen  
Primary Examiner